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*Resume*

CIA LATE ITEM

IRAN-US: Reactions to Rescue Attempt

Press reports indicate that the Iranian Government has ordered an immediate probe into the aborted US effort to rescue the hostages, but does not intend to make a statement until later today. The militants occupying the US Embassy stated they would issue a communique--if the news were confirmed--specifying what action they would take. In other foreign press reaction, TASS reported without comment Washington's announcement of the reasons for the cancellation of the mission. Moscow Radio, however, has described the rescue attempt as a "provocation." (U)

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COMINT Channels

Top Secret  
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TOP SECRET/EXDIS/DECEMBER

STATE INR Summary  
25 Apr 801/2  
34 Jan 80LATE ITEMMILITANTS WILL ISSUE COMMUNIQUE REGARDING ABORTIVE  
RESCUE MISSION

Iranian authorities today ordered an immediate probe into the White House announcement that a mission to rescue the hostages had been aborted, according to press reports. While officials in Tehran withheld official comment, many privately expressed disbelief. A civil aviation spokesman declared that no unauthorized aircraft could land anywhere in Iran without being spotted by radar. Tehran radio has reported the story without comment. The office of Iran's Joint Chief of Staff promised a statement for later today. The militants also declared they would issue a communique specifying what action they would take, if reports of the mission were confirmed.

Elsewhere, TASS termed the operation an "armed provocation against Iran" and "an unprecedented piece of adventurism." Syrian state radio labeled the mission "an overt act of aggression," and claimed that Egypt and Israel extended facilities to planes involved in the operation. Israel has denied any involvement.

INR Comment: The militants will very likely renew their threat to kill the hostages if an attempt is made to free them. (CONFIDENTIAL)

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